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To: Vaccine Providers  
Vaccine Distributors

From: Robert W. Morrison  
Vaccine Manager

Subject: ProQuad® Shortage

Date: May 22, 2007

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Merck & Co. has notified the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that because of lower than expected amounts of varicella-zoster virus (VZV) in its recently manufactured bulk vaccine, they will prioritize production of *single* antigen varicella (Varivax®) and zoster (Zostavax®) vaccines over production of the combination MMR-V vaccine (ProQuad®). Merck had estimated that ProQuad® would be unavailable in July or sooner. However, they most recently reported that they are having difficulty filling some existing orders for ProQuad® in a timely manner.

Effective immediately, providers should order single antigen varicella vaccine and MMR vaccine instead of ProQuad®. All orders for ProQuad® received by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) after today will be converted to varicella vaccine doses until further notice. Providers should also contact their vaccine distributors to obtain doses of MMR vaccine.

Merck expects to meet the demands for Varivax® and MMR vaccines to fully implement the recommended immunization schedule. ProQuad® is not expected to be available for the remainder of 2007. The MDPH will notify you when ProQuad® becomes available again.

**Please Note:** Varivax® and MMR vaccines should **NEVER** be mixed together for administration.

If you have any questions about vaccine availability, please contact the Vaccine Management Unit at 617-983-6828.